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Implementation of Rubrics in an Upper-Level Undergraduate Strategy Class

Herbert Rau

Measurement, analysis, and feedback are necessary for improvement. In business one of the most hackneyed expressions is “you get what you measure.” Measurement and feedback are also critically important from an academic perspective, and it has received increased attention with the 2006 Spelling’s Commission report, “The Future of Higher Education” (Brint, 2008; Hamilton & Banta, 2008).

The Business and Economics Department at Utica College shares the concern of assessing all aspects of the student’s academic experience. While each course follows standard protocol for teaching at the post-secondary level—qualified instructors, college-level materials (texts and other resources), peer-reviewed syllabi and teaching, exams, and papers—assessing whether the goals and mission of the College are

being achieved needs to be assessed in a different manner. Consequently, the department has instituted rubrics as a tool to enhance the assessment process.

Rubrics may have several levels of use. An important purpose for using rubrics is to assess whether the mission and goals of the College—and the School—are being achieved. These goals extend beyond course content knowledge. To accomplish this purpose and align with the mission and goals of the College, seven rubrics were created in the Business and Economics Department and include

- Writing
- Oral presentations
- Technology
- Analytic and Decision Making
- Quantitative Skills
- Teamwork
- Ethics

While the use of rubrics measures whether these areas have been satisfactorily addressed across the curriculum and inform whether the goals and mission of the College are being achieved, analysis of rubrics assists in linking various disciplines of the College together. At Utica College, the overall

structure of offerings encompasses an integrated perspective of the humanities. Therefore, humanities courses, in conjunction with the topic specific courses taught by the Business and Economics Department, become the structure for the final degree. An example clarifies this statement. Since public speaking is a core discipline of the College (and this discipline is taught by a separate School), being able to link the presentation skills of students in business courses with their core courses from the Communication and Social Sciences Department helps to identify specific strengths and weaknesses that the composite student body might have, and consequently allow for modifications in the courses (if necessary) that are currently taught by the Communications and Social Sciences Department. To use contemporary business parlance, an internal customer-supplier relationship is maintained across disciplines. The result of the teaching by the Communications and Social Sciences Department is an input into the courses later taught by the Business and Economics Department.

Rubrics also help to

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clarify for the student the expectations beyond content knowledge that must be mastered, and rubrics serve as an adjunct to the syllabus regarding topics that need to be addressed. As will be noted later in this article, the rubrics address individual aspects of a particular topic, and the detail that is explicated ranges from nine items for the written rubric, to 15 items for the analytic and decision rubric. Bolton (2006) wrote about the first aspect in "Rubrics and Adult Learners Andragogy and Assessment," while Stenzel (2005) noted the second aspect in "Assessment in Undergraduate Counselor Education: A Contract with Clients."

Another benefit in using rubrics is to understand how the process of teaching is performed. Analysis of the results of rubrics helps to determine deficiencies in a particular course or program, and allows for corrective action. Gerretson and Golson discussed this benefit in "Introducing and Evaluating Course-Embedded Assessment in General Education" (Gerretson & Golson, 2004). An example discussed later in this article also illustrated this point.

Additionally, rubrics may be used as an adjunct to the grades of the individual students, as well as being used as a tool to assess the program itself. Using rubrics in addition to specific comments on student-submitted papers provides an overall perspective for the student on the strengths and deficiencies of their work.

Initial Work Before Implementation

The process of implementing the business rubrics at Utica College began with the formation of a committee of tenured and tenure-track faculty who were supported by a core faculty member of the College in the Health Sciences (and also who functions as the site mentor in assessment). With guidance from the site expert, an outside resource from East Tennessee University presented to the Business and Economics Department the rubrics that are used at East Tennessee University, and explained East Tennessee University's process of creating and implementing those rubrics. This portion of the process was critical in enhancing the speed of creation and implementation of the proposed business rubrics at the Business and Economics Department at Utica College. While the faculty was fully capable of creating rubrics without this assistance, it is highly likely that the process would have taken significantly longer.

Interestingly, the process still took one year from initial conversation to the beginning of implementation. The department team of four members convened on a bi-weekly basis to review the Mission and Goals of the Department, to determine what rubrics were necessary to be created, to review material from East Tennessee University, and to generate rubrics that would achieve the purpose of guidance and assessment

that was desired as easily as possible. Matrices were developed to determine where the rubrics would be used, and most importantly, where in the student's future career the skills that were being assessed by the rubric would actually be needed.

As may be typical in an academic setting, long discussions ensued over word choices, elements to be assessed, assessment methodology, linkages across the various course offerings, the proper place and time to perform the analysis, and external resources that might be utilized to enhance the assessment process. As an example of the detail addressed, one month of discussion revolved around the particular writing standard that should be used regarding proper citation of sources.

As previously noted, seven rubrics were created for the undergraduate program (writing, oral presentation, ethics, technology, teamwork, analytic and decision making, and quantitative skills). Six rubrics were created for the graduate program (analytic and decision making, writing, ethics, technology, quantitative, and teamwork). The individual rubrics contained multiple elements. An example of one specific rubric is discussed later in this article.

After the committee completed the first draft, the completed rubrics were presented to the Department's faculty for approval.

After review, a pilot assessment was needed, and one specific course piloted the implementation, because all rubrics (excluding detailed quantitative analysis) could be conducted in this course. The specific course was a strategy course taught at the junior level, and the structure of the course allowed for adequate assessment of writing, oral presentation, use of technology, analytic and decision-making, ethics, and teamwork.

Implementation

The pilot began with the rubrics being explained to the students at the beginning of the semester. In addition to reviewing the syllabus for the course, each student was also given a copy of each of the rubrics that were to be used in the course, and each element of the various rubrics was addressed during the first class. The use of the rubrics was also reinforced throughout the semester. The first rubric to be used, and the rubric that received the most attention due to the structure of the course, was the writing rubric (this particular course had been identified as a writing intensive course for the management program). For the first six weeks of class, student writing was reviewed in class (names of the students omitted to protect the innocent), and the students, as a whole, would review the writing for professionalism, competence, grammar, style, and content.

The issue of style needs further explanation. As the course was designed, the writing assignments were not merely limited to the standard case-analysis student-paper submission, but also included writing that addressed a wide variety of styles that are required in the business community. In addition to the writing rubric, a modality of writing document was created that determined the different types of writing that an executive might be required to create. Included in the modality of writing document was writing of resumes, emails, product recalls, standard operating procedures, executive briefings, and detailed business analysis documents. In all, a total of 13 different types of writing were identified, and seven types were assessed in the course.

The "Modality of Writing" document follows:

Clear, concise, and compelling writing is required for effective communication in a professional capacity. Effective communication is necessary in order to

- *Convey data, information, understanding, and wisdom*
- *Request data, information, understanding, and wisdom*
- *Educate,*

- *Serve as an historical reference,*
- *Call to action,*
- *Sway opinions,*
- *Alert to dangers or changing situations,*
- *Amuse,*
- *Converse and align with colleagues, suppliers, customers, and a vast array of stakeholders.*

In order to be considered competent, business professionals must master a variety of writing modalities—for personal as well as professional reasons. When a specific form of writing requires citation, adherence to a recognized style of citation (MLA) is expected. Ineffective or inappropriate communication will limit the career success of any professional, while simultaneously limiting effectiveness regarding the pursuit of their professional duties and responsibilities.

The modalities of writing to be mastered in both an electronic and paper format include

- *Email*
- *Business correspondence*
- *Executive briefings*
- *Presentations*
- *Reports*
- *Research papers*
- *Legal briefs*

- *Analysis*
- *Motivation brochures and publications*
- *Announcements (to customers, suppliers, colleagues, and the general public)*
- *Training/ education documents including specifications, SOPs, and other policies*
- *Human Resource documents (i.e., Performance Reviews, written warnings, letters of recommendations, etc.)*
- *Résumés*

Each form of written communication is distinct. Each form of written communication requires sensitivity to the audience and its needs, the appropriate and industry-accepted format for the information that is conveyed, and in some cases, an understanding of any legal implications.

The Modality of Writing was used in the strategy course. As an example regarding the use of the writing rubric, in addition to the normal case analysis writing, the writing assignment for the case study of “Merck and the Recall of Vioxx” (Thompson, 2004) in *Crafting and Executing Strategy: The Quest for Competitive Advantage* required the students to draft a notice that would be written by a typical Marketing Executive to the external community regarding the recall of Vioxx. The purpose of this

particular writing assignment was to assess the student’s ability to write a notice regarding a potentially disastrous corporate issue (injury or potential death to an individual, a situation that might cause significant market share loss, major legal challenges, brand destruction, or similar problem), that explained the situation to the public, was truthful and informative, helped the customer to understand the issue and its ramifications, and attempted to contain the serious situation and not destroy the company. For a different case study, “Smithfields Food’s Vertical Integration Strategy” (Hosmer, 2004) in *Crafting and Executing Strategy: The Quest for Competitive Advantage*, along with the necessary case analysis, the students were required to write an internal email message regarding a particular aspect of the case that addressed the issue at hand, without becoming fodder for potential plaintiff lawyers in the event of a lawsuit by residents surrounding the North Carolina facilities. After the student’s work was submitted, the various writings were copied on transparencies, and the entire class assessed grammatical errors, context issues, style of writing, and any unique element that was particular to that specific assignment (such as the Vioxx and Smithfield case requirements).

The result of this course structure was to quickly move the total class writing (within a two week period of

time) from an exercise of expedience as demonstrated by the student’s writing (as perceived by the instructor to be to write the assignment as quickly as possible, and be done with it), to one where the writing was crisper, less error-filled, and addressed the issue(s) at hand. From a measurement perspective for the writing rubric, the performance improved 50 percent at the third week of rubric use, and that performance level remained essentially stable throughout the rest of the semester. The final result for the semester showed that the aspect of writing with which the students had the greatest difficulty was being certain that the “topic was clearly stated and developed,” while the areas they had the greatest strengths included “writing format is appropriate,” “audience is properly identified and addressed,” and “information collected from appropriate sources.” Due to the nature of the assignments, less attention was focused on “citing information appropriately,” and “citing using the appropriate format.” While the students generally did not appreciate the ongoing use of the writing rubric each week, the quality of the written material improved, and the rubric became an element in the student’s individual grade.

Although the above discussion focused on the writing rubric, it is worthwhile to explain the analytic rubric in greater depth. The analytic and decision rubric is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Analytic and Decision Rubric

	Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Not Applicable
Problem Identification & Definition				
Student identifies and understands the problem/issue, and if the issue relates to any larger problem (big picture perspective)	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Student identifies the problem scope	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Student is able to determine relevant and irrelevant data, and is able to identify when more data is required	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Student demonstrates knowledge of the appropriate tools/methodologies for understanding the problem.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Analysis & Synthesis				
Student is able to utilize appropriate techniques/methodologies for managing problem analysis and the determination of effective decisions	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Student is able to effectively integrate data and connections, and actively incorporates alternative viewpoints and data into the analysis, and clearly states assumptions and biases	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Student demonstrates effective use of logic	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Student is able to design alternative potential solutions to the problem/issue	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Student demonstrates the ability to develop criteria for deciding trade-off analysis and explores implications and consequences for various actions including the incorporation of ethical issues	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Student is proficient in the appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative decision methodologies	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Implementation				
Student demonstrates an understanding of resource constraints	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Student demonstrates knowledge of a variety of implementation tools/methodologies	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Student is able to create a feasible implementation strategy including sequential and concurrent actions	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Student provides contingency plan(s) as appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Student creates a monitoring process for implementation and post implementation	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	
Overall Assessment				
Overall, the student:	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	

Results

One of the “deliverables” that was incorporated into the structure of the undergraduate class, was the presentation of a significant case analysis that required a team approach in the performance of the analysis and the creation of an action strategy. Each student was given a copy of

both the analysis and decision rubric, and the oral presentation rubric, and assessed each team’s performance. The results of the students assessment of their classmates were added together for each team, and the results of the total class assessment was presented the following week. Table 2 provides an example of how the undergraduate students

actually used the rubric in the assessment of their fellow student’s team oral report. Some of the undergraduate students did not assess every component of the rubric, and consequently, the totals do not always add to the same amount. The numbers in the boxes are the tallies of the undergraduate student’s rating for their colleagues

Table 2
Analytic and Decision Rubric Results

	Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Total
Problem Identification & Definition				
Student identifies and understands the problem/issue, and if the issue relates to any larger problem (big picture perspective)	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 24	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	42
Student identifies the problem scope	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 21	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	40
Student is able to determine relevant and irrelevant data, and is able to identify when more data is required	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 27	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	38
Student demonstrates knowledge of the appropriate tools/methodologies for understanding the problem.	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 24	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	42
Analysis & Synthesis				
Student is able to utilize appropriate techniques/methodologies for managing problem analysis and the determination of effective decisions	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	44
Student is able to effectively integrate data and connections, and actively incorporates alternative viewpoints and data into the analysis, and clearly states assumptions and biases	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 25	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	42
Student demonstrates effective use of logic	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	41
Student is able to design alternative potential solutions to the problem/issue	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 25	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	43
Student demonstrates the ability to develop criteria for deciding trade-off analysis and explores implications and consequences for various actions including the incorporation of ethical issues	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 26	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	40
Student is proficient in the appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative decision methodologies	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 24	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	40

	Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Total
Implementation				
Student demonstrates an understanding of resource constraints	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 27	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	41
Student demonstrates knowledge of a variety of implementation tools/methodologies	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 25	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	41
Student is able to create a feasible implementation strategy including sequential and concurrent actions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 28	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	41
Student provides contingency plan(s) as appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 21	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	37
Student creates a monitoring process for implementation and post implementation	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 22	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	36
OVERALL ASSESSMENT				
Overall, the student:	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 23	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	39

regarding the analytic and decision rubric.

The students also were asked to include written observations regarding the various team presentations. These observations follow:

Total Team Assessment

Instructions:

Force-Rank each team as to which team presented the most compelling case. Why did you give the rankings the way you did?

Team 1 3rd Place

- Did not use analytical tools, strategies—just overview
- Team 1 worked very well together and made very valid points about Sony and their current situation.
- Could have been more articulate and had a little more research.

- Did not focus on problems/challenges facing the industry.
- Were somewhat unorganized and delivery was unprofessional.
- Good but didn't fully identify problems and future recommendations fully.
- Formal presentation, but it could have included more visual tools and analytical strategies. Solutions should have been presented.
- No solutions or problems. Wasn't that the purpose of this project?
- I figured that teams 1 & 2 gave the same sort of presentation—not very in-depth, but understanding enough to relate the problems in which the companies were addressing.

- Did not present any possible actions Sony should take to overcome current obstacles.
- They didn't exactly present issues or problems or ways to solve them.
- Well presented with great information.
- Was the only team which had the courage to present another presentation than Apple. Good presentation and very clear.
- I feel they needed more time. I felt they weren't organized enough.

Team 2 2nd Place

- Very well informed, using proper analytical tool. But no strategy path
- Team 2 assessed Apple and its situation.

- *Made a good case and had the facts to back it up.*
- *Focused on problems/challenges but did not give strong options.*
- *Did OK.*
- *Nice layout, developed problems clearly, conveyed efficiently, developed nice practical solutions.*
- *Very thorough presentation. More concepts could have been used to help the audience visualize the issues and solutions better.*
- *Clear cut and dry information. Didn't provide information relevant to the matter at hand.*
- *I figured that teams 1 & 2 gave the same sort of presentation—not very in-depth, but understanding enough to relate the problems in which the companies were addressing.*
- *Presented several possible plans for future but spent too much time describing current products.*
- *Most reasonable recommendations, well structured presentations, good problem analysis.*
- *Presented more problems and solutions to those problems. Also they used a SWOT analysis.*

- *Well organized but not informational enough.*
- *Good presentation, but pictures were missing.*
- *Great presentation and great information.*

Team 3 1st Place

- *The best due to answering all aspects of presentation*
- *Team 3 did a terrific job in analyzing the MP3 industry and made great points with their charts.*
- *Made the most compelling case because of the in-depth research and the attention to detail.*
- *Analyzed the market successfully and identified proper challenges and options.*
- *Nice presentation, well thought out and good PowerPoint work.*
- *Lots of relevant information, but a lot of it was repetitive, slides a little congested.*
- *This team went into depth of analyzing and exploring the case. In addition to that, this team was able to use many of the concepts discussed in class throughout the semester and apply them to this case.*
- *Very in depth, a lot of information, gave problems and solutions,*

seemed like they put a lot of thought into it.

- *Gave the best presentation, was very well organized and informational which is why they were the best team.*
- *Had the most in depth ideas on strategic plans & used the most analytic tools like SWOT, PESTEL, Group mapping.*
- *Used 3 tools and presented strong cases about problems.*
- *Great information and presentation—wow.*
- *Good presentation but a little too long.*
- *Did a thorough presentation. Used different analytical tools.*

It was apparent to the instructor that during the presentations by the three groups, the class did not adequately address implementation issues. The students had learned how to create strategies in this course, but they did not appear to have learned the issues that occur in attempting to implement those strategies. Fortunately, the existence of the rubric allowed for a quick intervention during the class to address some of the issues that are faced when attempting to implement a strategy. The awareness of the class deficiency in addressing implementation issues, also resulted in a correction to

the course design to more fully address this important issue. Part of the need for an adjustment in course design was observed during the team presentations, however, part of the insight for the need to adjust the course occurred from an analysis of the summary report for the analytic and decision rubric. The three items noted on the analytic and decision rubric receiving the lowest cumulative scores included “student provides contingency plans(s) as appropriate,” “student demonstrates knowledge of a variety of implementation tools/methodologies,” and “student creates a monitoring process for implementation and post implementation.”

Since a reason for using the rubrics in these classes is to help assess the broad program goals, and to help the individual students improve their mastery of necessary skills for professional work, it is interesting to gain a perspective on how the students assess the use of rubrics. Following are some comments from the undergraduate students regarding their perceptions of the analytic and decision rubric:

- Showed a different view
- Good models of effective decision making
- Models provide orientation in the future
- Pointed out areas of your work to be improved on

- I don't think the scales provided enough range to accurately assess the work
- Gave me ideas of what to include in my paper and what points to hit on when writing it
- Didn't understand it
- Indifferent
- It let me know where I stand and what I needed to do to change
- Didn't effect my work

It is also interesting to note, that the undergraduate students were asked to evaluate the usefulness of five rubrics—writing, oral, teamwork, analytic and ethics. These students found the oral rubric to be of the greatest use (5.8 on a 9 point scale), while the analytic rubric was of the least value. However, even though the analytic rubric was rated as the least useful, it still received an assessment of being moderately useful (4.6 on a 9 point scale). The analytic and decision rubric's average score was driven by a low 1st quartile rating of 2, while the oral rubric's 1st quartile rating was 4.5. Because of the anonymous nature of how the data was collected, it is not known if low assessment-rating scores by the students were driven by students whose skills in analysis were already strong, or whether the low assessment rating scores by the students were

drive by individuals who were annoyed by the entire assessment process. It is interesting to observe that students who rated one rubric poorly, also tended to rate the other rubrics poorly. This may suggest that these students did not perceive any value of the process.

Discussion

Several observations may be noted. A rubric not only serves as a tool for assessing what knowledge and skills have been acquired by students, and whether the goals of the program are being achieved, the rubric also serves as a “crib-sheet” for the instructor of what must be discussed in the course, and whether the instructor has adequately addressed the issues that were intended to be covered. As a “crib sheet,” the rubric is reflected against the syllabus for the course, and the weekly progress of the students is monitored to be certain that the various elements of the rubric are addressed in the appropriate modules of the course, and to assess whether the material has been adequately taught. In the example noted above for the undergraduate class, it became apparent after the student presentations that the students did not fully grasp the significant difference between creating a strategy, and developing the plans for implementing a strategy. The realization of this situation allowed the instructor to focus time on this distinction with the

introduction of an additional module, and therefore cover in greater detail the difference between these two business processes.

A different benefit regarding the process of creating a rubric also needs to be mentioned. As noted above, the rubrics that were created involved a team of four instructors. Jointly, through the creation of the rubrics, the committee determined what topics should be addressed in a particular course. Consequently, the syllabus for an ethics course was restructured to include a topic that was originally not included. This resulted in a course that more completely achieved the goal of the department. Also as noted above, linkage of various disciplines is strengthened by a judicious use of rubrics.

The creation of rubrics is not a difficult process, although it is somewhat time consuming. A particular challenge that needs to be addressed is regarding the time resource required to use it within a class. This issue needs to be addressed through a comprehension of the underlying perspective that drives the rubric process, and the outcome(s) expected of that process. Two different principles may be followed; 1) the rubric is being used to assess the progress towards meeting the goals/mission of the program, and therefore only needs to be conducted on a represented sample of the student body (addressing political as well as internal needs), 2) the rubric is being used as an adjunct to other

assessment instruments within the class (in addition to the assessing of non-content knowledge of the students), and therefore every student should be measured.

Obviously, the first position is less time intensive. Supporting the findings of Gerretson and Golson (Gerretson & Golson, 2004), an additional hour each week for each class that was utilizing the rubric would be more than satisfactory to accomplish the task if the first position is adopted by a particular program or course, and it is likely that in the most "streamlined" of implementation an additional hour for the entirety of the course may be attainable. However, time demands quickly escalate when each student is being assessed. For example, when using the teamwork rubric for a graduate class, it took an additional eight hours of work to assess a class of thirty-seven students for one assignment. If each of the rubrics were uniformly applied to each student in this graduate class, the time demand would easily exceed forty hours for additional grading.

The time demands for the undergraduate class were substantial. For each student-submitted paper, that student received at least two, and frequently three separate assessments. Specifically, the primary assessment focused on the assigned paper – that is, did the student address the issues that were required by the assignment. The second assessment focused on the

writing rubric, while the third assessment focused on the analytical and decision rubric. The technology rubric assessed the entire semester, and also addressed the team presentation (that is, the use of the computer projector or other technology that might have been used during the presentation). The ethics rubric focused on one specific paper. The teamwork rubric was used once, and the oral presentation rubric was used twice during this course, because there was one small individual presentation by each student during the semester, in addition to substantial and joint presentation scheduled for this class.

In total, the writing rubric was used eight times, while the analytical and decision rubric was used six times (the writing rubric use began in the third week of the class, while the analytical and decision rubric began in the fifth week of the class. The sums of the strengths and weaknesses of each student were tallied and factored into the final grade of the individual students. In addition, a summary report of the entire class was generated in order to determine the cohort's strengths and areas for improvement, and what modifications to the class structure and teaching would be necessary to improve performance of the class. Fortunately, the class was reasonably sized in order to accomplish this work.

Both methods have merit. An overall assessment allows the Department to efficiently monitor the effectiveness of their courses and program, and efficiently adjust as necessary. However, individual assessment of each student results in a richer evaluation of the student, and this results in a more thorough assessment for the final grade. The decision is up to the Department and the individual faculty member.

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